

RESPONSES TO SENATOR HUGHES' QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell us publicly the budget totals for the CIA and for the rest of the intelligence community? If not, how are we to judge whether these amounts are appropriate in view of the intelligence product and the competing claims for government resources?

Answer:

The budget totals for the Central Intelligence Agency and the members of the intelligence community have traditionally been maintained on a classified basis and revealed only in executive session. I defer to the appropriate congressional authorities for any change in this procedure. Budget requests are reviewed in detail in the Agency's annual budget hearings with the Appropriations Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

2. In order for the responsible committees of Congress to do their work on national security matters in a better informed way, would you accept legislation requiring the CIA to furnish these committees regular and special reports on matters within their purview, subject of course to proper security measures? Would this not be a valuable addition to the infrequent and wide-ranging briefings now given the Committee?

Answer:

The Director of Central Intelligence traditionally has given briefings on the world situation and on specific topics to a number of Senate and House committees. I will review the matter and report to the Armed Services Committee on the possibility of supplementing such briefings by appropriate written materials, provided these can be maintained on a classified basis. I think this can be accomplished without legislation.

3. What steps have been taken or will you take to ensure that the CIA never again will be involved in domestic American activities, as it was in the training of police personnel from several US cities and in the assistance to Howard Hunt and Gordon Liddy?

Answer:

A careful review has been made of all possible Agency involvement in domestic American activities, and instructions are being issued to ensure that no violation of the limitations of CIA's statutory authority takes place in the future. With respect to the training of local police personnel, I reiterate Dr. Schlesinger's assurance that, despite the fact that its legality might be defended, any further such action will be taken only in the most exceptional circumstances and with the Director's personal approval. Regulations are being developed with respect to CIA assistance to other U.S. agencies and personnel to ensure that any such assistance raises no question of CIA involvement in domestic American activities.

4. Mr. Colby, published reports say that your experience has been in the plans and operations side of the CIA rather than in intelligence or science and technology. Because of the availability of new technical intelligence gathering means, not to mention the backlash and suspicion in many areas of the world regarding agents, do you believe that the time has come to reduce some of our overseas operations in order to put greater stress on intelligence analysis and science and technology?

Answer:

Over the past fifteen years great stress has been placed on scientific and technological intelligence gathering, which has made a great contribution to accurate knowledge of important foreign developments. Overseas intelligence operations must only be conducted in circumstances fully justifying the risks involved and in situations which cannot be covered by more normal methods. Analysis has made a substantial contribution to intelligence and is being improved and refined to the greatest degree possible.

5. Published reports also give you a key policy role in decisions to involve the United States in clandestine operations in Laos in the late 1950s and early 1960s -- operations which grew into a secret, CIA-run war.

a. On reflection, do you believe that it was wise for the Agency to get involved in such military operations?

Answer:

The Agency's activities in Laos were undertaken in direct response to Presidential and National Security Council direction in order to carry out U.S. policy and at the same time avoid the necessity for uniformed U.S. involvement in Laos. These activities grew in size over the years to meet greater North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao pressure. The size to which these operations grew made it difficult to maintain normal intelligence procedures. Despite the difficulties for CIA, I submit that the Agency fulfilled the charge given it efficiently and effectively.

b. Do you believe that it is proper under our Constitution for such military operations to be conducted without the knowledge or approval of the Congress?

Answer:

The appropriate committees of the Congress and a number of individual senators and congressmen were briefed on CIA's activities in Laos during the period covered. In addition, CIA's programs were described to the Appropriations Committees in our annual budget hearings.

c. Where should the line be drawn between CIA and Defense Department activities involving the use of armed force?

Answer:

In general, the line should be drawn between CIA and the Defense Department with respect to armed force at the point in which the United States acknowledges involvement in such activities. As a practical matter, however, the scale of the activity will, in many cases, also affect whether the United States is revealed as engaged in the activity.

6. Where do you -- and should we -- draw the line between simply gathering intelligence and manipulating events or interfering in the internal affairs of other countries? In particular, why should the CIA play any role in nations of the underdeveloped world which pose no conceivable threat to us?

Answer:

As indicated above, the use of intelligence techniques should be reserved to cases of importance in which no other means will serve. This same approach is even more stringently applied to any activity which could be construed as interfering in the internal affairs of other nations, and such activities are only conducted under the specific direction of the National Security Council. With this approach, it would be unlikely that CIA would play a role of this nature in any nation whose policies pose no conceivable threat to United States interests.